

SANIBEL FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT
Minutes of the Fire Commission Meeting
March 10, 2021

Commissioners – Chair Jerry Muench, Vice Chair Bruce Cochrane, Secretary Richard McCurry
Fire Chief Bill Briscoe
Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Barbot
Division Chief of Training Tim Barrett
Division Chief of Fire Prevention/Fire Marshal Larry Williams
Administrator Mary Hickey
Assistant Administrator Samantha Quinn

In attendance were the following: Breeze Newspaper journalist Tiffany Repecki and Medical Director Dr. Benjamin Abo.

Commissioner Jerry Muench opened the meeting at 9:02 AM. Commissioner Muench led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1st Order of Business: Deputy Chief Barbot reviewed the calls, stating February 2020 we responded to 129 calls and February 2021 we responded to 158 calls. Total YTD calls for 2021 are 291 and for YTD calls 2020 we responded to 236 calls. Ladder 171 is out of service; they have completed all repairs and we will be picking it up tomorrow. The leaks they found are fixed, and they are under warranty. Commissioner Muench asked about the leaks. Deputy Chief Barbot said, there was an oil leak, coolant leak, and a crack in the reservoir. Deputy Chief Barbot went on to say, our new Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Bell has been on board since Friday, and our Medical Director Dr. Abo credential him the same day. We have three firefighters that are working as acting officers, these are all senior guys, who know the district, the tools, etc. All were willing to step up. The promotional exams are next week. We have Chief Officers coming from outside the county to give neutral opinions during the exams. Commissioner Muench asked, what do you mean by outside? Commissioner McCurry asked, so all the guys typically know each other but with officers from outside the county they won't, that's a great idea. Fire Chief Briscoe said, yes with one exception. Deputy Chief Barbot said, all the guys are happy with the new changes too.

2nd Order of Business: Administrator Mary Hickey reviewed the account balances. The has received 89% of all ad velorum taxes for the year. You also see the funds summary breakdown, not much has changed due to the interest rates being so low.

3rd Order of Business: The minutes for the February 10, 2021, commission meeting were reviewed and accepted by the Board Members. A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was second by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

4th Order of Business: Division Chief of Training Barrett stated fire training still consists of the 5-minute drills, concentrating on the first 5 minutes of the fire. We repeat these drills to ensure muscle memory. We have been working with the new firefighter Bell, plugging him into situations. He is doing great. We will escalate the drills over the next 6 months. These are easy to do but still provides great training. We did Rapid Intervention Training (RIT). This provides training to ensure proper mental clarity and execution. We are looking into purchasing a RIT bag for the third engine, this will allow the firefighters to get to any firefighter in distress. For example, if we work with another fire district our RIT bag fits with their air packs. We completed Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) which is done every 6 months to meet national standards. Medical Director Dr. Abo is coming in on the 25 of this month to go over pharmaceutical drugs, what drugs the patient may have, and what effect they may have on the patient. Commissioner Muench asked, how often does he come? Division Chief Barrett said we hope to get him here 9 out of the 12 months. Fire Chief Briscoe said, he comes by regularly to go over training with the firefighters. Division Chief Barrett said, he is very hands on and progressive. The lecture is on the 25th and you all are welcome. Commissioner McCurry asked, what time? Division Chief Barrett said, 9 or 9:30 am, I will have to confirm though. For the Special OPS side, we had a swim test coming up this week, but the water is about 67 degrees, and we are going to reschedule it in a couple of weeks. Public Education and CPR training will be to certify employees at Ding Darling National Refuge.

5th Order of Business: Fire Marshal Williams stated he is doing a lot of upgrading on fire alarms at businesses on the island. A lot are switching over, same as we are with both of our stations, to cellular. I am waiting on the compaction test for the fire access lane at Joey's Custard. Fire Chief Briscoe said, we did Doc Ford's, and that's what we agreed too but the 5 feet on their property needs to meet compaction for our engine. Fire Marshal Williams said, they have to prove it meets the

compaction engine test. I met with Lee County Mosquito Control to store tanks off Bowman's Beach. They are using a grant for mosquito testing. It is more than 70 tanks at any time. Commissioner McCurry asked, how big are the tanks? Fire Marshal Williams said, 20 pounds. I met with Island Water Association for a new subdivision going in on the island. Fire Chief Briscoe said, we met with the investors before they purchase the land and we told them what we wanted, and they are going to do everything we discussed. Fire Marshal Williams said, I am working on target hazard at Periwinkle Place to get training with the fire crews on how to maneuver through there, they have new fire panels and are replacing smokes throughout. Commissioner Muench asked, what is going on with the church? Fire Marshal Williams said, they didn't get permission for the siding from the historical society, so all construction stopped until approval. It was stopped again because of the front, all due to the historical society. Commissioner McCurry asked, so not the right permits? Fire Marshal Williams said, they had all the right permits it's all because of the historical society. The inside is done, and we're ready. I just can't do a Certificate of Occupancy until the front is finished, so we have to wait. Commissioner Muench asked, they didn't like the siding? Fire Marshal Williams said, they didn't get it approved with the historical society. Commissioner Muench said, I know if a building is on that registry you need to follow certain rules.

6th Order of Business: Fire Chief Briscoe discussed how we are working with Captiva Fire Department; they are looking at their fire hydrants. We are one of the only districts that still own them, we have no problem maintaining them, but we don't want to own them anymore. I am ok with maintaining them by flushing them and oiling them, because this gives the firefighters a better grip on their locations. We need your (the commissioners) permission to ask them to take them over. Commissioner Muench said, this is very controversial. Commissioner McCurry asked, why would we do that? Fire Chief Briscoe said, if someone hits a hydrant, we have to pay for it and it's very costly. If we go into a subdivision and if we add the hydrants, we can pay a one-time cost. Will you all be OK with this? Commissioner Muench said, I see no problem. Commissioner McCurry asked, if they own them, do we still get to tell them where they go? Fire Marshal Williams said, yes in Lee County they own them, but the fire district determines their locations. Commissioner McCurry said, ok I am in favor of that. Fire Marshal Williams said, if a valve goes bad, we get charged for all that right now. Commissioner McCurry asked, we still test the pressure? Fire Chief Briscoe said, yes that is what we are proposing, and the local knowledge for the crews is vital. Fire Marshal Williams said, all hydrants are completely painted. Fire Chief Briscoe said, that would still be an expense we entail.

Fire Chief Briscoe said, while at the commission meeting for Captiva Fire Department I learned that our excess insurance for the district is set at \$1 million per event and \$2 million per aggregate. Captiva Fire Department is about \$1 million per event and \$5 million per aggregate. We are way off. Deb Thomas, our insurance provider, said it is up to the board. My personal insurance is set at \$1 million. Our insurance is low, and she is going to give us quotes on increasing our coverage. Commissioner McCurry asked, will insurance give an assessment? Fire Chief Briscoe said, no, it is up to the board. Previously we would have limited liability but that only goes back so far. I'll have the quotes for next month. The RIT bag that is in the back. Division Chief Barrett said, if a firefighter mask gets compromised this bag has a new mask, connections, and it's essential if we are going to have a RIT team. Commissioner Muench asked, we have one, but you want another? Fire Chief Briscoe said, we have two, but we have to swap them if we utilize the third engine. We want to swap or move trucks without having to move equipment. Commissioner Muench asked, what is the cost? Fire Chief Briscoe said, it was already budgeted for this year and the cost is \$5821.62. Commissioner McCurry asked, if it was in the budget shouldn't you buy it? Fire Chief Briscoe said, I'm going to purchase it unless you all tell me otherwise. Commissioner Muench said, let's think about this. Fire Chief Briscoe said, if we send another truck off island and we are left with two trucks, we are missing a RIT bag, of course this is in the event something does happen. We want the third truck fully supplied; this has been a 20-year project. Medical Director Dr. Abo said, \$5,000 you're saving millions on wages and disability, with how long it should last you're looking at about \$250 per year. Administrator Hickey said, this has been submitted for the budget for many years and always turned down, and that fact it's in the budget we should purchase it. Medical Director Dr. Abo said, you guys take great care of your equipment. Administrator Hickey said, this has been asked for years. Fire Chief Briscoe said, I know of at least 3 years they have planned this. Administrator Hickey said, we need a resolution. Commissioner McCurry said, we have it in the budget, why do we need a resolution. Administrator Hickey said, we've always done it that way. All the commissioners approved the purchase of the RIT bag. Administrator Hickey said, they can purchase the equipment and I'll have the resolution next meeting.

Fire Chief Briscoe said, we are updating our fee schedule to match Captiva Fire Department. I will bring this to you all at next month's meeting. We eliminated some fees and added or adjusted others. Fire Marshal Williams said, the plan review fee, I am seeing what is countywide and where we are at. Fire Chief Briscoe said, we'll bring all these changes to the next meeting and determine the time to implement the fee changes to the public.

Fire Chief Briscoe said, everything is good with the boat and we are waiting for sea trials, which means we are waiting for the water to thaw. Deputy Chief Barbot is on the meeting for the local IMT team. Fire Marshal Williams is an arson investigator on the team, Division Chief of Training Barrett is area command, I am area command and strike team leader. Deputy Chief Barbot, they will probably want him at area command for bigger incidents, like fires or hurricanes. We use the IMT process in this county to back up every fire district. I will be adding Deputy Chief Barbot and adding Administrative Assistant Quinn as the PIO spot and Sam would be on call every 5th week, same with Barbot. Division Chief of Training Barrett has a different schedule. Barbot will go in on any incident to shadow and get the knowledge. Quinn does not have to be trained as she is already qualified. Commissioner McCurry asked, how about her title? Fire Chief Briscoe said, I am ok with not changing her title.

Fire Chief Briscoe said, the auditors are coming in at some point in time to meet with us and to meet with the commissioners. Administrator Hickey said, we need to pick a day with everyone. Commissioner McCurry said, and they will actually meet with the board because they haven't in the past? Fire Chief Briscoe said, yes.

Fire Chief Briscoe said, we are sending five people to FASD, Commissioner Bruce Cochrane, Commissioner Richard McCurry, Administrator Mary Hickey, Assistant Administrator Samantha Quinn, and Deputy Chief Kevin Barbot. Assistant Administrator Quinn is going since she will be taking the Certified District Manager class next week, we are sending Deputy Chief Barbot because he is receiving his CDM certificate, and Administrator Hickey is on the board. We are not sending Captain Tracy or Lieutenant Dimaria. Lieutenant DiMaria will be focusing his efforts on his potential upcoming promotion. Our current member Firefighter Tracy will not be attending since he is in the DROP and he will not be moving up. We are looking at the cost benefit of our members for FASD. Commissioner McCurry asked, Firefighter Tracy is in the DROP? Fire Chief Briscoe said, yes, he has 3 years left. We need to look and see who is best for the district to send. To groom someone who is interested in moving up. Commissioner McCurry said, so it's unlikely he will promote? Fire Chief Briscoe said, no. Division Chief of Training Barrett said, moral is awesome, and we have people who are interested in moving up. Commissioner McCurry said, good we won't have trouble filling a spot.

Fire Chief Briscoe discussed HB 1103 and how the task force going after special districts. Administrator Hickey said, fire districts are number one out of all the special districts. Fire Chief Briscoe said, this is going to be a big deal and we need to prepare as this is going to be a performance audit. For our district it is great because what they get and what they pay is great. Commissioner McCurry said, when was the last time we had a Performance Audit? Fire Chief Briscoe said, we have never had one. They want all the districts under one entity, similar to the State of Florida. Assistant Administrator Quinn said, the meeting I watched this morning said the performance audit would be handled every 5 years. This may be a budget issue. How much is the annual audit? Administrator Hickey said, the performance audit will run about \$10,000 and the annual audit is around \$25,000 to \$30,000. They are trying to supersede us. Commissioner Muench said, that's a big deal, they are taking away our rights as a district. Fire Chief Briscoe said, we'll have to put together an education campaign with SFRD and Captiva Fire Department. Commissioner McCurry asked, so they want to get rid of all special district, this is way bigger than just a performance audit. Fire Chief Briscoe said, currently there are 1100 landowner special districts. At the Chief's Meeting this will come up. We need to get together as a group. Commissioner McCurry asked, can we get local reps to meet with us? Or we can't go because of Sunshine Law? Administrator Hickey said, are you saying meet one on one? If the Chief's published the meeting, then you could all get together. I'll call Leroy today; they have a Forum that would meet. It stopped because of two people, I should get with him and get it back together again. Fire Chief Briscoe said, we need to educate the people.

Fire Chief Briscoe began discussing vaccination for Covid-19. He spoke with the President of the Fire Chief's Association about the presentation on the media of Collier County firefighters helping administer the vaccine and why Lee County fire departments aren't involved. The president met with Lee County Florida Department of Health and explained how Lee County chose to be a pilot program that utilized a list system to administer the vaccine. Lee County chose to do it differently vs Collier and Charlotte through the Department of Health. Department of Health is planning on giving homebound residents the vaccine next, and they will use CDC messaging. We are making traction and moving forward in the right direction. Commissioner Muench said, it's the Department of Health not Sanibel Fire. Fire Chief Briscoe said, yes, all fire departments are willing to help but we would have to take a class. South Trail Fire & Rescue District has offered classroom space for the class, but all departments are waiting for the guidance from the Department of Health.

7th Order of Business: Years of Service for March. Fire Chief Briscoe stated, Firefighter Robert Bell started March 1 with the district and Firefighter Robert Wilkins started March 18, 2013 and has been with the department for 8 years. Division Chief Barrett said, this new recruiter is a great addition. Fire Chief Briscoe stated, Dr. Abo credentialed him on day one. Administrator Hickey said, that is a first for the district.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Commissioner Jerry Muench

Commissioner Bruce Cochrane

Commissioner Richard McCurry